

The Inquirer.

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[ONE PENNY.]

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TOPICS AND EVENTS.

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THE "Essex Hall Year Book," which has just been published, signals a departure which has been long desirable. The earliest attempt at providing an almanack and register of Unitarian and allied congregations, with their ministers, was made, we believe, by our esteemed predecessor in the editorial chair of the *Inquirer*. Subsequently, as all the Unitarian world knows, the publication of such a work was undertaken in connection with the *Unitarian Herald*. It has become evident, however, that private responsibility was hardly sufficient for the needs of the case—and the new publication exhibits what can be done by means of the resources available to a public society like the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, under whose auspices it has been prepared and issued. Without precluding ourselves from giving a further notice of the contents of the "Year Book," we may briefly indicate its leading features.

It opens with a brief historical sketch of the course of thought which has resulted in the existence of Unitarian congregations to-day, and this historical sketch is supplemented by a statement by the Rev. Frank Walters of the chief affirmations of Unitarian theology. A few paragraphs concerning the British and Foreign Association complete this preliminary matter. A singularly clear list of ministers, with their addresses, and details as to education and commencement of ministry is then given; and this list is followed by a list of congregations, with the addresses of the secretaries or treasurers, the names of the present ministers, dates of their settlements, and information as to the hymn-books used. (In a subsequent edition we hope room will be found to indicate where the service is liturgical, a point which is very important for visitors.) Following some pages of very valuable information respecting educational institutions, societies, trusts, &c., comes a list of Sunday-schools with addresses of the superintendents. An Obituary of the past year is given, including not only the names of ministers deceased, but also of prominent members of congregations. The inclusion of the name of Mr. T. Field Gibson shows how admirably the editor has striven to bring his publication up to date. A calendar, legal and other information complete the book. It ought to be widely circulated among the churches and distributed to inquirers.

THE "Clerical's Progress to Absurdity" was never better illustrated than in connection with the Croydon School Board. This Board has been more than once mentioned in our columns in connection with the Bible-reading difficulty, and several facts have come to our knowledge illustrating the way in which the best of people are betrayed into unworthy tactics to support their orthodoxy. With respect to this subject, however, we believe the compromise arrived at is an agreement that a letter should be forwarded to head teachers under the Board, directing their attention to the desirability of some care in selecting from the historical books of the Bible passages for use in

their classes. The clerical party are anxious, however, that the children should learn some passages by heart, and it is in this connection that the quarrel has broken out again. The Rev. Christopher J. Street, having objected to the selection of a Messianic passage from the Birth Story in Luke, the Rev. R. W. Hoare objected sarcastically to the Beatitudes; a proceeding which reminds one of the homely saying about cutting off the nose to spite the face.

UNDIGNIFIED as this squabbling about texts must have been it has hitherto been conducted in the privacy of the sub-Committee for school management. Last week, however, a section of this Committee sought relief by appealing to the whole Board on the matter, and in the multitude of counsellors there seems to have been less wisdom rather than more. The majority of the Board, after a tedious discussion, decided that neither themselves nor a sub-committee should regulate the choice of texts for learning by heart; but that the thirty-one head teachers should take the whole responsibility in the matter, and choose just what texts they pleased. Having enjoyed much intercourse with teachers, we have a high opinion of their ability as rule, but that they should be set up as theologians is a little ridiculous. The beauty of the arrangement is complete when it is added that every year the Board will revise the list of texts which the children have been already learning for the past twelvemonths.

At a meeting of the Central Nonconformist Committee, held in Birmingham on Friday week, the following resolutions, bearing on prominent educational questions, were adopted :—(1.) That this committee desires to call the grave attention of Nonconformists to the injustice that has been committed at Salisbury, where, notwithstanding the existence of a School Board, the Church party has been permitted to supply the deficiency in accommodation, and no unsectarian school is consequently available for the inhabitants in spite of the expressed desire of many to have one erected; and urges the importance of making strenuous efforts to obtain such alterations in the Education Act as may prove necessary to secure a proper supply of unsectarian schools for those who require them. (2.) That in view of the probability of legislation in the direction of paying the fees of scholars in public elementary schools, as indicated by the speech of the Prime Minister at Nottingham, this committee appeals to all Nonconformists to be prepared to meet and to resist any proposals that involve the payment of fees in any schools which are not placed under the control of duly elected representatives of the people during ordinary school hours.

"A MAN may be a Christian; he ought to try to be one. Two men, so soon as they are associated, cannot be Christians, and they ought not to try to be." Such in effect is the result of the Bishop of Peterborough's propositions—(1) That it is not possible for the State to carry out in all its relations literally all the precepts of Christ, and that a State which attempted this could not exist for a week; (2.) That if it were possible to do this the result would be a perfectly intolerable tyranny. In the space of a short note it is not well to combat these propositions; but if they are true then the question, "Is Christianity a Failure?" becomes an urgent one. Dr. Magee has frequently propounded paradoxes which have alarmed his friends and amused his opponents, but he has never launched a more damaging thunderbolt at his own Church than is involved in these contentions. Had an avowed infidel or opponent of Christianity made these assertions the whole episcopate, nay, the whole religious world, would have denounced them as an insult to the founder of Christianity. That a great deal may have to be done before a State can realise the teachings of Jesus as shown in the Sermon on the Mount is no doubt true. To assert that it is not possible, and would be wrong if it were, is another thing altogether.

SPECIAL ARTICLES.

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AUSTRALIAN LETTER: OUR COLONIAL CHURCHES.

THE visitor to Australian shores cannot fail to be struck by the peculiar mixture of likeness and unlikeness to English ways and customs. Landing in Adelaide he sees railway trains running through the streets; proceeding to Melbourne he finds the whole district provided with a network of cable trams, and upon arrival in Sydney he sees the unwieldy steam trams rushing through the narrow streets. In many respects the habits of thought are similar to those in the Old Country; indeed, there is a Conservatism which seems to be fossilised, while there is also a Radicalism which would startle English Liberals. Turning to religious matters one finds all the old denominations represented; and the English church stands contemptuously aloof from the sects who would be called Dissenters in England. The Unitarians are represented by three churches, one each in Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney. In regard to these there is the same spirit of Orthodox exclusion. The clergy of other denominations will not associate in religious affairs with the Unitarian ministers.

Many difficulties have faced the Liberal Churches in Australia, and, all things considered, perhaps they hold as good a position at the present time as they could expect. They have experienced that lack of internal harmony which must ever retard such movements. Churches that fall in with the current theology can badly afford to give way to dissension, and when the Liberal Churches that have to face outside opposition give way to internal controversy the result must be disastrous.

The Adelaide church has had a fairly prosperous career, under the able ministrations of the Rev. J. C. Woods, who has now given place to Mr. Dendy. The congregation, however, has shown no signs of growth during recent years, and some persons attribute this to the lack of the Democratic principle in church management. There has also been a striving to approximate to Orthodoxy in respect to words and phrases in the service. This has tended to drive away the younger men of vigorous thought and fervent aspiration, while it has failed to attract the liberal thinkers from Orthodox communities, because they do not see the necessity for breaking with the old Church if they are to have the Orthodox phraseology in the new.

That there is a desire for something less "churchy" is made evident by the fact that Mr. Wybert Reeve, a dramatic author of considerable merit, has, on two or three occasions, delivered Sunday evening lectures in the Unitarian church, and on each occasion the building was crowded. The visitor to Adelaide looks forward to a possible future when the cause of Unitarianism will take hold of the hearts and minds of the people.

Leaving this beautiful city the steamer next lands us in Melbourne, where there is a new and handsome Unitarian church, capable of seating about six hundred persons; also a lecture hall, which will seat about half that number. This building was erected during the four years' ministry of Mr. Walters, whom we shall again hear of in Sydney. The Melbourne Unitarian church has had many vicissitudes under the charge of the Rev. H. Higginson, and Mrs. Webster, and the Rev. George Walters. The old building would accommodate two hundred and fifty; but it was seldom filled. New life seemed to enter into it a few years ago, and although Mr. Walters was probably not more cultured or earnest than his predecessors, yet during his ministrations the church attained a position it had never had before. At what seemed the floodtide of prosperity he resigned his position, and accepted the Sydney pulpit, then vacant by the death of the Rev. Edward R. Grant. The Melbourne pulpit is now filled by the Rev. A. Macully, who was formerly a Church of England clergyman. He had to meet with difficulties at first, but by hard and steady work he is making his influence felt, and will probably build up a good congregation. The Australian church, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Strong and the Rev. Mr. Addis, is a formidable rival to the Unitarian Church, and we were informed that many of Mr. Walters' former congregation had gone over to Dr. Strong's. The service is an admirable one, and a splendid spirit animates the whole church and its kindred institutions.

Arriving in Sydney, and asking for the home of Unitarianism, and for some unaccountable reason expecting to find a small and ugly meeting-house in some obscure position, one is extremely surprised and pleased to discover that the Unitarian church is a really handsome Gothic structure, standing in an admirable position overlooking Hyde Park. All the suburban trams pass close by the doors, which is very important for the congregation, whose members, we understand, live a considerable distance from the church. Neat posters at the entrance announced that the annual floral services would be held on Sunday, Oct. 13, and the decorations on that day were indeed

very beautiful. In the morning there was a congregation of perhaps over two hundred, while at the evening service the sitting accommodation was far from adequate. Probably there were over five hundred persons present. The services were conducted by the Rev. George Walters, who in the morning spoke of "God and the Flowers," and in the evening gave a poetical sketch from "Titania," the fairy-queen of Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*. We learnt that the evening attendance was almost always sufficient to make the building look comfortably filled; while, on several occasions, the place has been crowded. The Sydney church has not escaped internal controversy in past years; but if it can preserve harmony, and persevere in the good cause, there should be a glorious future before it.

One would gladly write of Unitarian churches in Brisbane, Hobart, Auckland, &c., if such were in existence; but perhaps the day will come when every considerable centre of population will have its society of Liberal thinkers. As yet that day has not come.

ORIENT.

SERMONS.

Few things are more criticized, and even occasionally ridiculed, than sermons. Yet, perhaps, no other method of instruction or appeal exercises more influence, though often unconsciously in forming the mind of the ordinary church-goer. The schoolmaster may have a more effective grip of the childish mind. The leader article in his daily paper may supply the average man with material for conversation, and give him now and then a stimulus to action. But once a week, in some cases twice a week, from early childhood to serene old age, with the exception of his annual holiday, or times of sickness, the English citizen sits for twenty minutes or half-an-hour listening to the parson's discourse. He may occasionally slumber a portion of the time; but the mind that is only half awake will sometimes accept an idea more readily than when its prejudices are roused to guard the threshold of conviction. Even the slumberer will be ready to pass his word about the sermon among the companions with whom he leaves the church door. And, notwithstanding criticism, the information given by the preacher is generally trusted as accurate; the opinions he sets forth are often accepted as true; the exhortations he gives against vice and in favour of virtue are meekly submitted to, unless they touch the soul of the hearer too harshly on the quick. With such opportunities the sermon certainly ought to be, and indeed often is, one of the most powerful influences at work in moulding and guiding the Christian's life.

And yet we feel somewhat at a loss to give a brief, terse, definition of a sermon. Its object might, perhaps, be described as intended to promote the communion between man and his Maker. It includes the prophetic effort of the preacher to utter the word of God to his people, as well as the humbler, but more human desire to lead his flock to the great shepherd of souls. No sermon can possibly effect such all-important ends unless it speak home to the audience. Now every congregation includes persons of both sexes and all ages, and of very various degrees of intelligence and culture. Thus it is always difficult, and sometimes impossible, that the whole of every sermon should be adapted to all the hearers. We saw the happy idea expressed the other day that in every religious service there should at least be one hymn chosen for the children; and so, in every perfect sermon, there will be at least one passage fitted to the intelligence and experience of every hearer, and none will go empty away.

With regard to the topics of discourse, and the manner of their treatment, circumstances will suggest modifications, in each particular case, of any general remarks. Our churches may sometimes contain a preponderance of intelligent and educated men who are glad to learn from their preacher the results of theological study, for which they have no time themselves. But other less educated and younger members are also to be fed. And even the cultivated and thoughtful are not desirous of listening always to discussions on "fate, foreknowledge, and free will;" on the relations between science and theology, on the possibility of the miracles, or the authenticity of the canon. Academic training, and his own inquiring and growing spirit make many questions sufficiently important to require prolonged and earnest study from the minister, which must yet be introduced by him into the pulpit with judgment and a sparing hand.

We accept heartily the prophetic aspect of the preacher's work. Let him declare the Word of God in all its truth and breadth. Let him teach the doctrines of theology and morality which he holds to be vital. Let him occasionally, when necessity presses, even enter into the realm of controversy, so as to expose error, while he inculcates truth; let him impart correct information about the Bible, as a record of Divine teaching, and trace the ceaseless inspiration which has kept the Church of Christ, despite its errors and sins, an ever-living Kingdom of God. But let him never forget that these are but a part, and perhaps a less important part, of his pulpit work.

A minister is not necessarily a prophet. Not every minister can venture to assure himself that he has a word of God entrusted to him to deliver to his flock. Even he, who may humbly hope at times that a Divine message is committed to him, cannot assure himself that it will come at the stated hour when he takes pen in hand to prepare for his Sunday's duty. But every minister is a man; and to be fitted for his work he must be a man of naturally wide sympathies, and readiness to accept and profit by the experience of the passing years. He and his people find the paths of life thorny with difficulties, gleaming with temptations, gloomy with ignorance as to the right way. He needs to set forth the broad principles which shall serve each hearer as a touchstone to show the true from the false, to make clear the dark and smoothe the rugged path. Trial and sorrow are the universal lot of man, and the preacher's own experience will enable him to point to the light of God's love shining behind the clouds, or to inculcate the lesson of faith that the sun will rise after the darkest night. The life of the family, the ties of friendship, the union of Christian fellowship, the relations to the world, in short, the whole range of human intercourse, afford a ceaseless variety of subjects upon which instruction and exhortation will be universally welcome. May not the minister also feel that he and his congregation are fellow-sinners, desirous of reaching forward together towards virtue? And thus the erring relations of man toward God, and the doctrine of God's treatment of sin, afford a topic for discourse, which will be of ceaseless and universal interest.

But we must close this sermon upon sermons, lest we tire our readers. One word more we would add as to the constantly recurring question about delivery. A congregation desires to have its spirit roused and touched; it wishes to be fed with the bread of righteousness, and is willing to be shamed into penitence for sin. People will run to hear any preacher who will move them. A sermon perfunctorily read from manuscript; the discourse recited from recollection, or extemporised with difficulty and repetitions by one who has not the gift of ready speech, will be alike ineffective. But if a minister, by study of his subject, can so fill himself with its spirit that he speaks from his soul, and with all his heart, he will find his people interested and benefited, and practically careless about the method in which he prepares or delivers his sermon. We believe that the power of successful preachers lies in their effort, their earnest effort, to bring their people into the fold of Christ and the kingdom of God. That is a fundamental object in the sermon; and he who is actuated by it (which every true preacher is) will perceive what his people need for their edification, and he will give them the best he can with such a hearty spirit that he will surely instruct the ignorant, guide the erring, comfort the troubled, and lead their souls to God. A. W. W.

PRAYER.

PRAYER is one of the most stupendous facts that the human mind can deal with. For what is involved in it? Limitless space is filled with worlds of vast dimensions and countless in number, sustained as they circle in their orbits by energies too great for even imagination to conceive, and each individually containing within itself forces the least of which is amazing, either as a conservative or a destructive agent. Within these myriads of world systems of blazing suns and shining stars there lives and operates the cause of their ordered arrangements and harmonious actions, the governing will, the mind, which, present everywhere, also transcends physical existence, at once holding all things within himself, and projecting them into being. Thus with respect to power we can but regard this mind as almighty, with respect to knowledge as omniscient, and to goodness as perfect, as He is the source of all energy, the origin of all law. On the surface of one of the least of these countless worlds of space there exists a creature, in size a mere mite, and as next to nothing compared to the bulk of the world to which it belongs. What, then, is it compared with the whole of material being? Well, then, the astonishing thing is that this fact of prayer asserts that this apparently insignificant creature can lift up its mind from its immediate surroundings, and enter into communion with the Great Being, in the light of whose consciousness all the events of time are transacted, and who is alike the creator and sustainer of this vast and glorious universe. In return for the aspiration of this earth-creature it receives inspiration from the Centre and Source of existence; thought answers to thought, and love to love in this communion of the two. On the first realisation by the human mind of the meaning of this fact, it bears the character of arrogance and presumption, causing intelligence to draw back shuddering, and all but overwhelmed at the immensity of the thought, while reverence sinks overborne by the burden of the mere conception. After the first shock, however, the powers of the mind gradually recover their balance and activity, as it recollects that bulk is not of much account

in the moral world, that vitality and intelligence are infinitely more and higher in order of being than that which simply bulks in space; and that the communion which takes place between the two results from the small earth-creature being essentially of like nature with Him who is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe—the one being mind finite, the other Mind Infinite. That this communion is real we have many facts to show, for as science proves its facts by experiment, so religion demonstrates its facts by experience; and what is experience but constantly repeated experiments? Let us look at two or three:—

1. Men in all ages and in every clime, obeying an instinctive impulse of their nature, have in some form sought communion with the Spiritual. The crouching of the savage before his fetish, some mere inanimate thing which for some reason he holds sacred; the worship of tree and animal because of the indwelling mystery of life; the sacrifice of what was most precious to desire or affection to the great-world forces; the spontaneous cries for help in danger or difficulty, all are manifestations of the innate and intuitive elements of man's nature in immediate connection, consciously or unconsciously, with the spiritual world. The operations of man's mind is not all a process of mere dry thinking; impulse from feeling oftener than not mingles with his thoughts, and gives them their direction, if not their form. All these facts of human life tend to prove how natural and instinctive Prayer is to man.

2. We are bound to believe in the reports of consciousness if we are to have anything to rely upon at all. Prayer asserts and fulfils a law of man's nature. Men who have felt themselves drawn by an inward necessity to speak to the invisible reality bear testimony to the fact that in the highest and clearest hours of spiritual aspiration they are conscious of a mind revealing itself to their minds—a soul conversing with their souls, as real as their communion with their fellow men. They assert also, and the tenor of their lives bears them out, that as when they hold converse with a good man of fine faculty they have the best powers of their mind brought into play, so the noblest activities of their soul are stimulated and strengthened by their intercourse with the Highest in what we call Prayer.

3. These men, too, bear witness to the fact that in the hour of temptation, when they have been solicited to do some wrong for the sake of private gain or for public advantage, when they have needed a strength greater than their own to enable them to successfully resist, they have felt a clearing of their vision, an increase of moral power, which has made them victorious over the assailing evil. The help that has come to them has been like a reinforcement to an army hard pressed by superior numbers on the battle field. The coarser passions, the baser motives, the harsher judgments, have all given way before this new access of moral energy. Prayer cannot be engaged in without thought, and thought of an intensely earnest kind; and so the truth of what Emerson asserts is made good by this fact, when he says that "No man ever prayed heartily without learning something," for the spirit's eyes are opened to much that else would be hid from them.

4. Men who have had a flood of sorrow flow in upon them threatening to overwhelm them, have often testified to the fact that when they have lifted their hearts to Him who is the Gracious Hearer of Prayer, they have felt consoled, and the truth, clear, burning, bold and bright, has come to them, that the trials and troubles of life are necessary to the soul's discipline, and that they are the teachers of wisdom essential to certain and permanent spiritual good. For this short life is not for enjoyment, but that those powers may be enlarged, quickened, and strengthened, which will go with men into the eternal world and be theirs for ever.

5. Prayer, in spite of its tremendous implications, is a real fact, a genuine power, and not a mere seeming. There is actual communion between man and God, conscious on both sides, giving in the one case and receiving in the other. When man amidst the grandeurs of nature, awed by its vastness, thrilled by its beauty, kneels before its unseen Spirit, and acknowledges his dependence, and pours out his thanks for its beneficence, or remembering his sins, asks pardon for them, and feels an incoming of new moral power, and the sense of forgiveness steals over him, it is not a mere reflex influence of his own moods or consequence of his own internal motions he experiences; but if life and thought be real at all it is a fact as real as that the sun's heat absorbs the moisture of earth, and returns it as fertilizing rain. Real prayer subjects the human will to the Divine Will, eases the pain of disappointment, takes the sting from conscience by destroying the power of sin over it, sweetens life, and helps to make men like God, whose company he keeps while he communes with Him, whether in individual or in social worship. W. M.

BELIEF IN CHRIST.

THE writer of the Fourth Gospel gives us, as a saying of Jesus, these words: "Ye believe in God; believe also in me," and they seem

to touch a truth often overlooked, and practically denied. Which comes first, belief in God, or belief in Christ? Do we believe in God because we believe in Jesus, or is the reverse the case?

Now vast numbers of theologians and teachers of religion seem to adopt the latter course. They tell us we can only know of God through the Bible, and especially through the record of what Jesus said and did. They insist that no explanation of life is forthcoming but what we get by supernatural revelation in Christ, and that, apart from that, all is a blank. This view throws the whole fate of humanity upon the Bible record, and has compelled those who hold it to cleave passionately to the dogma of the infallibility of Scripture. If that fails God to them becomes a myth, a dream, a mirage. They balance the pyramid upon its apex, and tremble lest it should topple over.

But surely this is a wild absurdity. In what other field of truth do men stake everything upon an individual man? Do we believe in gravitation only on the word of Newton, or in evolution only on the authority of Darwin? No! These things, if true at all, were true ever since the world was, and these men only interpreted for us the ways of God. We believe in Newton and Darwin *because* having once been brought by them face to face with a great fact we find they have reported rightly to us the eternal truth of that fact. They have made plain what was a mystery; but once it is made plain it justifies itself, and we no longer believe because of their speaking, "for we have heard for ourselves and know" at first hand.

This applies just as fully in religion. We may have been led face to face with God by Jesus, or any other great seer of divine truth; but once the holy vision has dawned upon our souls we no longer depend on human aid, we no longer believe because of Jesus, but we *know*, and are satisfied. But when knowledge has come can we honour and love too greatly the Master soul that has guided us in former blindness, and led us to the light? "Ye believe in God; believe also in me." Yes, prophet and seer, we *do* believe in thee, because none other has so manifested the eternal being of God.

H.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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(The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. All letters to be inserted must be accompanied by the sender's name and address, not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.)

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THE CLAIMS OF THE "INQUIRER."

SIR,—During the year now drawing to a close the *Unitarian Herald*, our only representative newspaper in the north of England, has ceased to exist, except as a name; and our oldest denominational organ—the *Inquirer*—has been reduced in price to one penny. These are great and important changes in the periodical literature of Unitarianism, and demand the serious attention and consideration of all interested in its diffusion. As one of those I desire to place on record my high estimation of the services rendered to liberal Unitarianism by the *Inquirer* during the forty-seven years of its existence, and I claim to speak on this point with some authority, for through all those years I have read the paper regularly week by week, and have seen how ably and faithfully, under successive editors, of varying phases of Unitarian opinion, it has advocated and defended the great principles of freedom, tolerance, and progress, for which Unitarians have always contended, and in support of which, amidst all diversities of thought, they have been and still are perfectly agreed. Of course, during that long period there have been occasions when I differed from the editor in some of his opinions; but on the whole, the *Inquirer* has been from its commencement, fairly representative of the successive changes in Unitarian theology during the last half century. These long, consistent, and successful services deserve our gratitude for the past, and our help in the future; and as it is evident that an un-subsidised newspaper of the size and quality of the *Inquirer* cannot be published at a penny without loss, unless the circulation is large and the advertisements numerous, it behoves all earnest Unitarians to consider how they can best promote the welfare of a paper designed and adapted to diffuse a knowledge of our views and to supply a record of our denominational life.

Doubtless our Ministers and cultured laymen will be ready, as heretofore, with able and generous contributions to the columns of the chief and oldest Unitarian newspaper; but those of us who cannot so render assistance may do much to enlarge its circulation. Ministers interested in the spread of a broad and free Unitarianism should take means to bring the paper under the notice of their congregations, and as it is not found on bookstalls nor in the news-vendors' windows, facilities for obtaining it should be afforded in every chapel, and it should be on sale for casual buyers at every chapel door. In these

and other ways that may commend themselves to those interested in the work, much needful help may be afforded to the *Inquirer*, and through it to the good cause it serves, and we may reasonably hope that all who have hitherto taken one copy at twopence will now take two at a penny, and utilise the extra copy as a means of bringing the paper under the notice of others not already acquainted with it, and thus, perhaps, making our views more widely known and appreciated.

I trust, Sir, you will not be too modest to allow this humble testimony to the long-tried merits of the *Inquirer*, and this claim on its behalf for increased recognition and support, to appear in its pages as an expression of the gratitude and hope of

Birkenhead.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.

UNITARIANISM AND THEISM.

SIR,—As this is not a mere personal question, but one of vital importance to all religious men, I must ask your kind indulgence for a reply to the letter of the Rev. P. W. de Quetteville in your paper of this date.

Mr. de Quetteville says: "The horrible pictures of God and his teachings" (I said 'dealings,' not 'teachings,' C.V.) to which Mr. Voysey alluded, have rather a Theistic than a Christian origin, for is not the Old Testament full of these pictures?"

No, Sir, the horrible pictures of God and his dealings to which I alluded are not to be found in the Old Testament at all, but only in the New Testament. Election and Predestination and Everlasting Hell and the wrath of God abiding in those who reject the Son are exclusively the property of the Gospels. They have no place in the Old Testament at all. Jesus Christ is the first great religious teacher who made these horrors a prominent part of his teaching. He did not invent them, it is true. He found them rife in Judea, where they had been transplanted from Babylon. But they did not come from Theism, nor from the Judaism of the Hebrew Psalmists and Prophets.

There are horrible pictures of God and his dealings in parts of the Old Testament. But the worst and blackest god *there* painted is an Angel of Light compared with the God of the Gospels, who will keep sinners and devils alive in torments which never end. This view of Christ's teaching in the Gospels is not a private view of my own, but it is the view which has been accepted by the Christian Church for eighteen hundred years. It is the only *honest* interpretation of Christ's own words. Will Mr. de Quetteville have the hardihood to say that this horrible view came out of the Theism which we find, e.g., in the 16th, 23rd, 100th, 103rd, and 145th Psalms?

He further asks: "Does Mr. Voysey accept his Theism from the light of nature, or from the prophets of the Old Testament, whose conceptions of God and of His government are so often evidently erroneous?"

We get our Theism from the testimony of Reason, Conscience, and Love within our own selves, just as the old Psalmists and Prophets did, without Bibles, or Churches, or Christs. And it is by the same means of instruction we detect the "erroneous conceptions of God and His government" in the Old Testament, and also detect the unspeakably *worse* conceptions of God in the teachings of Christ as reported in the New Testament.

I owe my religion and my happiness to God, and to God alone, on whom I cast myself entirely when I first discovered that Christ was a hindrance, and not a help in finding my Father-in-heaven. Nor did I *know* what the Old Testament contained of the same sublime and simple religion till I had found and embraced it for myself.

I do not wish to continue to contribute to this controversy, but I sincerely hope it will not be allowed to drop until the minds of Unitarians at large are fully awakened to the supreme importance of the questions—How far is the prevailing sentiment about Christ based on truth and fact? Is it not largely due to the corrupting influences of worldliness, and a thirst for popularity?

CHARLES VOYSEY.

Dec. 14.

THE BITTER CRY OF THE DESK BIBLE.

SIR,—I have a complaint to make, and, from something that I have heard, I think that it is most likely to come to the ears of those of whom I complain if I send it to you.

It is not of my old friend and master that I complain. He and I have been long acquainted, and I may say that we are on intimate terms. He always treats me well, and many and many a quiet five minutes we have had together while the organ was being played before service. He takes me gently on his knee, and handles me lovingly; and, on my side, I have got to know his ways, and I open at once where he wishes to read.

But my old friend—he is getting old now—has been away from home. We have not met for a long time. In his stead many people have handled me, and it is of some of them that I wish to make my

complaint. The very first Sunday after my old master left me I found myself in the hands of a young man, who came from some Board—I think I heard them say. He snatched me up in a way which fluttered me; and then he turned me over and over till I thought that all my inside would be shaken out. When he had done with me he shut me up with a bang which made me tremble. I hoped that I should never again meet with that young man. But the next Sunday there came an old gentleman who hurt my feelings more than the young man had done.

I should tell you that I am not one of the new-fashioned things, revised, I think they call them, but a handsome—if I may so speak of myself—Oxford printed and bound folio. I should have thought that the old gentleman, who, I am bound to say, looked very stately, would have taken me into favour at once; my type is so clear and large. But it was not so.

"Hum," he said, throwing me open, "s. like f. Why haven't these people a modern type?" Not a nice remark; but that was not the worst. Taking out a thick lead pencil he put black marks to show the verses he did not wish to read, and long lines under some other verses; and there the ugly pencil marks are still. What my old master will think of me when we meet again I do not know.

Another gentleman who used me wore black gloves. Every time that he turned a page he left a black mark, and once, when he stopped to talk, he put his elbow right in the middle of one of my pages; and there, just where it is written "Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot," is a great black smudge.

Dear Mr. Editor, will you, if you please, make my complaints known? for I really begin to be afraid of what may happen to me. Especially if that gentleman with the "black lead," as he called it, comes, I fear that worse things may be in store for me. I have my feelings, though I am only a

READING DESK BIBLE.

SMITH'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE.

SIR,—The story about the articles on the "Deluge," "Flood," &c., is not new. I heard one of our ministers repeat it years ago; but on referring to the work I find that it does not direct the reader to "flood" from "deluge," but to "Noah" in both cases. The preacher was ignorant of how the writer managed with "Noah." Of course, that was his own fault; but the reader will find fourteen pages of closely printed small type by J. J. S. Perowne, who acknowledges his indebtedness to the works of Lyell with others, and "the writer has further to express his obligations to Professor Owen and to Professor Huxley, especially to the latter gentleman, for much valuable information on the scientific questions touched upon in this article." Perhaps this will prevent your readers from repeating the story seriously.

Dundee.

HENRY WILLIAMSON.

WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

"What is a Christian?"

"Faith above all—it is the Christian's word;
Love over all—it is the Christian's soul;
Life beyond all—it is the Christian's hope;
To lay down mortal life for Christ who lived
For Truth and Love, and died for Life Immortal—
This it is to be a Christian."

SIR,—The above beautiful passage is taken from "Vivia Perpetua, a Dramatic Poem," by Mrs. Sara Flower Adams, the author of the well-known hymn, "Nearer my God to Thee," and other hymns, a Unitarian lady. It is the touching story of an early martyrdom, and the words I have quoted above are answered by Vivia Perpetua, with the certainty that the avowal of her faith condemns her to a terrible death.

Though not an argumentative answer to the late controversy, it is one, I imagine, Christians of any age would be willing to accept as the heart of their faith.

E. F. B. FOX.

MILNROW UNITARIAN MISSION.

SIR,—The paragraph in your last issue respecting our services at Milnrow closed with an expression of regret that the North-East Lancashire Association had deemed it necessary to postpone the course of lectures which they had granted, until "the autumn of 1890." I am glad to state that the Association, since the paragraph was forwarded, have expressed their willingness to allow the lectures as soon as I can arrange them. May I also through your columns acknowledge a subscription of five shillings from the Rev. Carey Walters? If we could obtain a few more our work could be prosecuted more vigorously. The services have been carried on now for four months without a penny of outside help. Members of our chapel choir walk to Milnrow in the afternoon, and we have supplied all the musical arrangements so far. We shall not be able, however, to send a choir to the special

services, and my own congregation, composed largely of working people who have already quite as much as they can do in maintaining our numerous organisations at Clover-street, cannot well be asked to pay for a special choir. They will do what they can, I am sure, and if a few subscriptions could be obtained we should be able to procure the services of one of the best professional quartets in the district for the lectures. The cost will probably be £10; if I could get that and £30 more I could carry on the work during the whole of next year without appealing to one association or the other. Nay, with our present economical arrangements, £20 would be enough, and I guarantee to make a Unitarian for every one of the 30 sovereigns required before December, 1890.

Rochdale, Dec. 23.

T. P. SPEDDING.

LITERATURE.

(Publishers and others sending books for review are respectfully desired to state prices.)

SHORT NOTICES.

The Christmas number of *The Publishers' Circular* might be found helpful to those buying gift books, for it consists largely of reviews (generally favourable), and very good illustrations from many volumes recently published. (Sampson Low and Co.)

A Chaplet of Amaranth consists of extracts from the writings of the author of "From over the Tomb," a work with which we are unacquainted. These brief sentences are often wise and suggestive, as, for instance, "It is useless to take your earthly heart to heaven; there is no heaven for it." The drift of the book is eminently practical. (James Burns, Southampton-row, pp. 102; price not given.)

Retrogression or Development is a short study of the practical effect of the Spencerian philosophy on the spiritual life, as represented in one who devoutly believes in the "Incarnate God—Jesus Christ." The author, Mr. F. Nevill, convinced us of his earnestness in his former book, "The Service of God." His limitations become more apparent when he measures swords with the Evolutionary doctrine; but it is impossible not to admire the courage and good faith with which he stands up for a form of faith which is evidently so dear to him. (Kegan Paul, 3s. 6d.)

Dr. Joseph Parker's volume, entitled *The People's Family Prayer-book*, naturally presents the religious life in colours somewhat different from those in which Unitarians regard it; but it would not be difficult, were there no better supply of prayers already to hand, for them to find very useful material here. The style is popular, the sentences being short and memorable; and the print renders it very easy for domestic use. A number of semi-homiletic meditations are given for those who cannot attend service, and provision is made for a family register. (Hazell and Co., 10s. 6d.)

Jonathan Merle, by Elizabeth Boyd Bayly, is a novel with a hero who is pierced through with the sorrows of the times in which we live, but who lives his life bravely in a great hope, of which the heart is his trust in God. We have not space to do justice to the book, which is as healthy a piece of woman's fiction as we have read for months. Perhaps we had best recommend it by describing it as no unworthy companion to "John Halifax." The author is cultured, sympathetic, and on the whole self-restrained, which last is an unfamiliar virtue with writers who have something to say. (Jarrold, 6s.)

Louisa May Alcott: Her Life, Letters, and Journals. (Edited by Ednah D. Cheney.) This is the title of the book so sympathetically referred to in the Rev. R. A. Armstrong's contribution last week. We are indebted to "R. M." for the following further particulars, which may guide many readers in the purchase and use of the volume. Mrs. Cheney was the life-long friend of Miss Alcott, and has thus special qualifications for the work of piecing out the story of her life, where any hiatus occurs in the journals. The book traces her genealogy as far back as John Alcocke, of Beverley, one of "Fuller's Worthies," and then traces her development from the "Childhood," when she expressed the keynote of her beautiful life in the baby words, "I love everybody in dis whole world!" Early youth is spent at "Fruitlands" (a "Brook Farm" experiment of her father's), and then she passes through her "Sentimental Period" to the time when she begins to be a writer. We less regret our inability to reproduce here any further extracts from her writings, as we believe the book will be a popular one, and readers will revel in it for themselves. It contains two portraits of Miss Alcott, and this pen and ink sketch will fitly close this notice. Her appearance was "striking and impressive rather than beautiful. Her figure was tall and well-proportioned, indicating strength and activity. Her head was large, and her rich brown hair was long and luxuriant, giving a sense of fulness and richness of life

to her massive features." (Roberts Bros., Boston, U.S.A., 1889. Pp. 400)

The Reader's Index of Reference, by Henry Axon.—The editor and proprietor of the *Bolton Express* has not only hit upon the very thing that is wanted, but has worked out the thing almost to perfection. Many of us have some arrangement or other to help us remember where we read a certain passage, incident, fact, story, anecdote, or where we have it carefully put by. But who of us, notwithstanding our arrangement, has not, during this present year alone, wasted hours in hunting for the passage, &c., we just wanted, and found our physical and mental search in vain? How, in this busy time, those people do who have no scrap-book, drawers, envelopes, boxes, books, or some such scheme we cannot tell. But here is a book of 200 pp., running alphabetically, which can be used easily by anyone in all kinds of reading; if in newspaper, magazine, or book, such an one should come upon anything he would ever like to refer to again. For example, each leaf (about 12 inches by 9) is divided into so many columns, with headings such as "Title of book, newspaper, &c.," "Name of subject or article," "number of issue," "volume," "page," &c., "day," "month," "year," each column spaced according to character of headings. The volume is well bound, the paper good, and perhaps the fact that the "Index" itself seems to have arisen out of the author's own needs as a newspaper man is a sufficient proof of its practical usefulness. He also publishes a volume of 400 pp. at 5s. 6d.; the one under notice here is 3s. 6d. We suppose it may be obtained through any bookseller by mentioning the firm of Henry Axon and Co., The *Express* Office, Bolton. J. J. W.

Master of his Fate, by J. Maclaren Cobban, is a clever piece of writing in the medico-mystic vein now so popular. The hero of the book, one Julius Courtney, is in possession of a secret, by which he learns to replenish his own vital energy at the expense of others. At last he learns, too late, that to selfishly have and use is to lose life. The scenes are laid in London, and are treated with much vigour. The scientific aspect of this interchange of nervous force is presented in connection with a hospital specialist, who recoils from the uncanny secret which, before his miserable end, the hero wishes to impart. (Blackwood.)

The Immanent God; and other Sermons. By A. W. Jackson, Boston (U.S.).—A genuine book for the times. The sermon that gives the title to the book could hardly have been written even by a Unitarian a quarter of a century ago; and yet the truth at the heart of it is very old. In its new form, however, the final result is doubtful. At present the teachers of it are devout, specially devout, imaginative, poetic; and it is not difficult to see that they have brought some of the fervours and raptures from the old faith to the new. But, as the "immanent God" becomes the immanent mystery of matter, or the immanent potentiality, or the immanent something, not ourselves, that makes for negative and positive, the fervours and raptures may disappear. But, to-day, Mr. Jackson, and men like him, are doing the world a precious service. The subjects of these sermons are a very excellent indication of their purport and tone:—The immanent God: The unsearchable God: The manifest God: Law, Providence, and Prayer: Satan, or the genius of trial: Self-abnegation: The way where the light dwelleth: The heart's plea for Immortality accepted. Have we suggested that the writer of these Sermons is conscious of any drifting from whatever we may mean by the "personality" of God? If so, it is only right that we should quote such passages as the following; as full of the personality of God as the twenty-third Psalm:—"An Infinite and Eternal Energy, tell me in simple speech, does this mean a being in whom all wisdom is? In any sense in which language can have meaning to me, does it give us at the soul of things a being that can know? Certainly it would seem as though this must be implied." "Is there personality here? Personality is a word which multitudes use with dim idea as to what it means." "Intellect, righteousness, benevolence, are they not, or do they not imply the attributes that enter into what you conceive as a person? Are things intelligent, are things righteous, are things benevolent? For my own part I know not how to believe these at the soul of things and erect my altar to any other than a personal God." The abstraction may do for the intellect, but the heart finds satisfaction only in the heavenly yet present friend. (Houghton, Mifflin and Co.)

East Coast Days and Memories.—Our old friend "A.K.H.B." appears at his best in this little book, which is about the thirtieth of his published volumes of sermons and essays. There is something pathetic in his frequent references to the approaching sunset of his life, and the growing necessity of "taking in sail," or, in other words, he begins to feel that he is past middle life, and has to take his work more easily than in the former years which have hastened so rapidly away. It was a great Anglican prelate, he tells us, who once said to him, "You must take in sail!" and "A.K.H.B." is always fond of

telling us what great prelates and statesmen have said to him, and how close an intimacy he has enjoyed with them. But there is something pleasant in his meandering style, his good-natured gossip about eminent persons, his occasional hard hits at the narrow bigots of his own Church, and his evident love—Scotch Presbyterian as he is—of the stately ritual and glorious cathedrals of the English Church, with which last weakness—if it is a weakness—the present writer is in full sympathy. Of this present collection of some thirty essays and fugitive pieces the most generally interesting are the lively sketches of two very different men, Principal Tulloch and Lord Westbury, with the former of whom the essayist was intimately associated at St. Andrews, while with the latter he appears to have had some acquaintance when a law student in London. As some of our own friends have lately been engaged in writing and compiling hymns, we read with especial interest the article on "The New Hymnology of the Scottish Church," being, in fact, a review of "The Scottish Hymnal," lately published by the authority of the General Assembly, and in the preparation of which the essayist seems to have taken a very prominent part. The result appears to have been much more satisfactory than may usually be expected from any work compiled by a committee, especially a committee of pugnacious Scotch divines; but Scotland has produced some admirable writers of sacred poetry, who were, no doubt, represented on the Hymnal Committee. It is amusing to note the strong objection taken to the suspicious word "Hymnal," as a symbol of Ritualism, Episcopalianism, and what not. Precisely the same objection would probably be taken by the average Unitarian mind, which seems incapable of discerning the difference between Ritualism and Sacerdotalism, and confounds in one indiscriminate anathema, liturgies, anthems, chants, and surpliced choirs. Fortunately, we are rapidly outgrowing this form of Puritanical narrowness, and, like our cultivated, æsthetic essayist, can see much to admire and imitate in a ceremonial which our forefathers regarded with unmitigated aversion. We should like to gossip a good deal more about these pleasantly written essays, which are generally light and amusing, although tinged here and there with a soothing melancholy. The title of the last is "All my Sheaves," and we hope this is not an unconscious prediction. We shall look with interest for still more sheaves, gathered in from life's ripening harvest with all the matured skill and mellowed experience of a veteran workman.—(Longmans, 1889. 3s. 6d.) M.

An Epitome of the Synthetic Philosophy, by F. Howard Collins.—An extremely valuable book to all students, of Philosophy is this compendious Introduction or Propædæntic to Mr. Herbert Spencer's works. It contains the essence of ten or more bulky volumes, and gives the general principles of the Synthetic Philosophy as far as possible in the Master's own words. The work has been undertaken with Mr. Spencer's sanction by a gentleman who has spent several years in the self-imposed task of making admirable indexes to his books, and he has been occupied for no less than five years in preparing this epitome. Mr. Spencer himself vouches, for what is indeed self-evident, that these condensed statements are at once correct and clear; but of course, divested as they are of all illustrative matter, abstracts such as these do not suffice to give vivid and definite conceptions; and this Epitome will not have accomplished its main purpose if it does not lead the reader, as it must lead every real student, to the original works. We give two or three extracts, which will serve to illustrate both the manner in which the work is executed, and some of the main principles of Mr. Spencer's philosophy in reference to Religion:—

"If both Religion and Science have bases in the reality of things, then between them there must be a fundamental harmony. There cannot be two orders of truth in absolute and everlasting opposition. We have to seek out that ultimate truth which both will avow with absolute sincerity. We cannot but conclude that the most abstract truth contained in Religion, and the most abstract truth contained in Science, must be the one in which the two coalesce. It must be the ultimate fact of all intelligence." "Religions diametrically opposed in their overt dogmas are yet perfectly at one in the tacit conviction that the existence of the world, with all it contains and all which surrounds it, is a mystery ever pressing for interpretation. If Religion and Science are to be reconciled, the basis of reconciliation must be this deepest, widest, and most certain of all facts—that the Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable."

The work is of course one for reference, rather than consecutive perusal; but we have been surprised to find how much more readable it is than might have been expected. (Williams and Norgate. 15s.)

"With all my Worldly Goods I Thee Endow" is the title of a one volume novel—the author's first, as he informs us,—by G. Washington Moon, F.R.S.L. The title indicates the chief point of interest, an ecclesiastico-legal one, about which the preface says Counsel's opinion has been sought, as well as that of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, with diverse results. The law of the land allows married persons to retain separate possession of property belonging

to them individually before marriage; while the Church ritual still insists on the man declaring in the name of God that he endows his wife with all his worldly goods. The author, contending that a contract must be binding in all its clauses to be legally so in any of them, submits that if this endowment clause in the marriage service is void the whole is void, and that very serious consequences would follow from such a contention, if legally valid, is obvious. In a few frank paragraphs the author begs the public not to borrow his book, but to buy it if reviewers advise them to do so. We do not advise, but we promise a good deal of amusement to anyone who acting on his own responsibility gets the book. It abounds in theological argument, has numerous verses of a devotional cast, and contains love, law, adventure and mystery enough for several volumes of the same size. The author's critical method may be illustrated by one reference. Replying to an argument that in the Isaian prophecy Christ is to be called "The Mighty God," and that therefore he was God, it is explained that "called" God he certainly has been and is, but that fact, while it fulfils the prophecy, does not imply the propriety of so calling him.—(Routledge. Price 3s. 6d.)

BOOKS FOR THE SEASON.—We have received several books of poetry, of different degrees of merit. We have read *Kæos: A Tragedy of the First Century*, with considerable pleasure. The author, Mr. Nathaniel Hurd, is unknown to us, but his poem, which deals with an incident in the Christian community at Rome, in the times of Domitian, is so full of good lines that we should be glad to see further work from him as good as this. (Elliot, Stock.) *Poems in Many Keys* is a modest little volume by our friend [the Rev. Edwin Smith, of Southport. It evidently contains the occasional verses of a scholarly and meditative life, many of them breathing beautiful thought; and to one acquainted with the incidents and persons to whom they refer they will be valuable for much more than their literary form. Mr. Smith's description of "Old M.N.C." will surely be preserved among the archives of that institution, if it were only for the graceful stanzas that tell of its professors in the old Manchester days. (Of the author, Birkdale, Southport. 2s. 9d., post-free.) In Mr. J. D. Parley's *Rambles in Rhymeland* (revised and enlarged edition) we have met with a clever and thoroughly enjoyable volume of poems in the manner of Præd and Calverley. The author is so well-known for his conspicuous ability as a reciter of humorous pieces that a high standard was naturally looked for in his own achievements as a composer of such literature. It is only due to him to say that our highest expectations were more than realised on the perusal of the book, which is sure to be a favourite. (Of the author, 6, Southwold-road, Upper Clapton, London. Price 4s.) *Fra Angelico* is the title of a little volume of poems of a religious order chiefly, by Mr. Gregory Smith. That a second edition has been reached is sufficient proof of the fair quality of the verses it contains. (Macmillans. 4s. 6d.) We may here direct attention also to the annual volume of *Young Days*, an admirable gift to our young people (S. S. A. 1s. 6d. and 2s.), and of the *National Temperance Mirror* (N. T. depôt, Paternoster-row. 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d.). *Flower Land* (by Rev. Robert Fisher, M.A.) is a neat little volume of botany, beginning simply and gradually advanced in detail; decidedly useful and attractive. (Bemrose. 4s. 6d.) *Hampstead Hill* (by Messrs. Lobley, Wharton, Walker, and Harting) is a popularly scientific guide to the geology, flora, fauna, and birds of Hampstead by recognised authorities. Indispensable to dwellers in the "N.W." district, and interesting to every Londoner. (Roper and Drowley. 2s. 6d.) The *Christmas Box and New Year's Gift*, a reprint of the first book issued by the Religious Tract Society (1825). A decided curiosity. The illustrations are sometimes borrowed from other publications of that period. (Field and Tuer. 1s.) *Hyppatia* (by Charles Kingsley), a wonderful sixpennyworth. (Macmillans.) Every Sunday-school teacher should have the fifth volume of the *Sunday School Helper*. It is crammed with useful material for profitable teaching. (S. S. A. 2s. 6d.)

THE REV. R. SPEARS begs to thank sincerely "Xmas, 1889," for the gift of £10 for the poor.

"HE DIED FOR ALL."—The Rev. Clement Pike writes:—"Your correspondent, Mr. S. D. Rodger, appears shocked by the words, 'He died for all,' conspicuously exhibited in one of our London Sunday-schools, and he fears lest the scholars should put any but his somewhat narrow construction on the phrase. The managers of the Sunday-school have such high authority for the sentence which your correspondent objects to, that perhaps they need no defence for conspicuously exhibiting it; but it may not be irrelevant to point out that St. Paul, the author of the statement, explains that, 'He (Christ) died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.'"

THROAT IRRITATION AND COUGH.—Soreness and dryness, tickling and irritation, inducing cough and affecting the voice. For these symptoms use Epps's Glycerine Jujubes. In contact with the glands at the moment they are excited by the act of sucking, the Glycerine in these agreeable confections becomes actively healing. Sold only in boxes, 7½d., this 1s. 1½d., labelled "JAMES EPPS AND CO., Homœopathic Chemists, London." Dr. George Moore, in his work on "Nose and Throat Diseases," says: "The Glycerine Jujubes prepared by James Epps and Co., are of undoubted service as a curative or palliative agent," while Dr. Gordon Holmes, Senior Physician to the Municipal Throat and Ear Infirmary, writes: "After an extended trial, I have found your Glycerine Jujubes of considerable benefit in almost all forms of throat disease."

NOTES AND NEWS.

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A SARCASTIC journalist says that Mr. Stead's new periodical is *not* to be called *The Holy of Holies*.

THE Bishop of Exeter will require candidates for holy orders in future to pass an examination in the history of some foreign mission.

THE Methodist Free Churches have issued a new form for the Annual Covenant Service.

THE week's obituary includes the names of Sir Joseph Heron, of Manchester, Mr. A. M. Kavanagh, formerly M.P.; Dr. Chas. Mackay; Dr. Lightfoot, Bishop of Durham; M. Havet, the French theologian; Dean Chancellor, vicar of Derby.

THE Bishop of Durham and the Archbishop of Canterbury were not only schoolfellows, but close friends at King Edward's Grammar-school, Birmingham. It is curious that Birmingham should have given to England three of the most distinguished Churchmen of their time, Dr. Benson, Dr. Lightfoot, and Canon Westcott.

THE correspondence between Professor Marcus Dods and the Rev. M. Macaskill is not cheerful reading. "They tell me you are a stupid." "And you are *polite*, and a *Christian*," fairly represents it. Perhaps they both feel the better afterwards; but the Church is not edified, and the Bible is no more free from error, and the arguments for a liberalised Christianity are no less convincing than before.

PRINCIPAL RAINY alleges that in Victoria the schools are so strictly secular in their methods of education that they carefully prune the poems of English writers inserted in the school books, eliminating therefrom the names God and Christ. As there is no worse cant than cant against canting, there is no sillier superstition than an overdone horror of superstition. But is it as true as it looks?

NEWS has been received of a terrible massacre on one of the Solomon Islands. A man named Nelson landed on one of the islands with three native boys to negotiate for the purchase of copra. He was invited by the local natives to go to a village to see the copra, and while he was examining the sample he was tomahawked, killed, and afterwards eaten, the three native boys from the schooner being similarly treated.

THEOLOGICALS of every school and Christians of all denominations will regret the death of the learned Bishop of Durham. Dr. Lightfoot has been excelled by few in the kind of genius that consists of great capacity for taking pains, and his candour has been as undoubted as his carefulness. Every student of the New Testament must regret that he did not live to complete his series of comments on Paul's epistles, while every student of the "fathers" will regret that Dr. Lightfoot can give no further aid. Dr. Lightfoot was sixty-one years of age.

"If twenty men put a shilling each into a pool, buy a goose, a sirloin of beef, and a plum-pudding, and then spin a teetotum to see who shall take the lot, that is a lottery, and the twenty men are all punished for the sin by the State. But if a duchess buys a fire-screen for £3 10s., and the same twenty men put a sovereign each into the pool, and spin the teetotum to see who shall have the screen, and the £20 goes to the parson or the Missionary Society, that is called a bazaar raffle, and no one is punished by the State."—*Wordsworth Donisthorpe*.

PROFESSOR AGAR BEET has just preached a sermon on "The Second Coming of Christ." He believes that the souls of the good sleep until the resurrection, having meanwhile pleasant dreams. The full reward will be at the resurrection, when Christ comes again. Before that day the Gospel is to have free course and be glorified, and this triumph of the Gospel will be followed by a great apostasy, in the midst of which Christ will appear. Everything indicates, says Mr. Beet, that "Christ is not coming yet." Little could the Thessalonians, who were exhorted to a "patient waiting," imagine that after 1,800 years they would need to wait an indefinite period longer.

HIBBERT SCHOLARS.—Messrs. Brinkworth (son of the Rev. J. A. Brinkworth, of Saffron Walden) and M. Rees, of M. N. C., have been granted scholarships by the Trustees.

DEATH OF A MINISTER.—We regret to learn that the Rev. R. B. Blackburn, the minister of the General Baptist congregation at Billingshurst, Sussex, died on the 17th inst. under very sad circumstances, his body having been found in the canal with every appearance of suicide. The deceased minister, who was in his fifty-seventh year, and was unmarried, had been in charge of the congregation since 1876, but had not resided in the district till within a few years ago. He was formerly, we believe, a Primitive Methodist local preacher, and at one time acted as chaplain to a cemetery at Nunhead. The inquest resulted in a verdict of temporary insanity.

The Inquirer.

A Religious Political, and Literary Newspaper and Record of Reverent Free Thought.

ESTABLISHED 1842.

LONDON, DECEMBER 28, 1889.

BISHOP LIGHTFOOT.

IN losing the Bishop of DURHAM not only does the Anglican Church suffer, but Orthodoxy itself is sensibly the poorer. The deceased scholar must be counted among the few really first-class minds that range themselves on the side of the traditional theories of Church and Scripture. Now he has gone there is no one else of his Church to place beside Dr. WESTCOTT as an authority on New Testament literature. The peculiar qualities of mind possessed by the deceased prelate eminently fitted him to be the literary champion of a Church which has included many of the most erudite scholars named in English history. His vast acquisitions from a life-long study, his deep sympathy with the sublimer thoughts of the first generations of Christianity, and his dignified eloquence as a writer qualified him for the duties of a defender of the faith. A certain fine wrath impelled him on occasion to carry vigorous war into the enemy's camp with some effect. It was but in the summer of this year that his memorable essays on the still anonymous book, "Supernatural Religion," were at last republished,* and the preface, dated from Bournemouth in the spring, attested a grave but passionate adherence to the side which, fifteen years ago, he took up on the original appearance of that remarkable book. The "Reply," also a republication, was speedily forthcoming, and both books will be henceforth necessary to every student of the history of the first and second centuries of our era. Our own position in regard to the controversy needs no more than the briefest indication in this place. The learned Bishop accuses his veiled antagonist of unduly pressing every alternative to its least favourable conclusion. Apologists, of whose number Dr. LIGHTFOOT did not disdain to be reckoned, are fully as chargeable with the tendency to force what is doubtful into the service of orthodoxy. Much depends on temperament; a little more on methods of training. We imagine that a mind trained from the earliest years to apologetic arguments will be less capable of discerning their weakness and insecurity than a mind that comes to the study of history without a similar bias towards a foregone conclusion. Equal candour may exist on both sides; but equal freedom to judge strictly according to evidence is not given to men steeped in various degrees of prejudice. Notwithstanding the unmistakable dialectic victories which the great scholar of the Church scores over his unguarded, and, if truth must be told, his sometimes reckless antagonist, we believe the ultimate victory will tend rather in the direction of the latter's views than in that of his valiant and occasionally scornful critic.

It is not, however, the part of an Englishman to remember to-day anything but the nobler services rendered by the great dead to his generation. If Orthodoxy is to be ultimately worsted in the long battle between truth and tradition we trust it will ever be given to both sides in the struggle to readily acknowledge the worth alike of friend and foe. There are, indeed, no foes where all the combatants in such a fight are honest searchers after truth. And that the late Bishop was such a true soul his sixty years of fruitful labours and unblemished integrity stand for witness in the eyes of many, not of his Church, who would fain claim a part in the reflected fame of their great countryman.

THE WORLD IN 1889.

SINCE SAMUEL JOHNSON invited his readers to "survey mankind from China to Peru" the process of making such a comprehensive survey has been appreciably facilitated, and, despite a little twinge of self-ridicule, one may avail himself of the halting moments of the season to consider the drift of human history. Any sketch of the progress of affairs in the world must necessarily be imperfect. Admirable as our modern system of communication may be as compared with that which existed in bygone ages, it is impossible for the most indefatigable observer to claim a complete knowledge of the contemporary life of man.

* "Essays on the Work Entitled Supernatural Religion." Reprinted from the *Contemporary Review*. Macmillan. Price 10s. 6d. "A Reply to Dr. Lightfoot's Essays." Longmans. Price 6s.

We are surrounded by intricate mechanism, by means of which the doings of men in the remotest parts of the earth are reported in every great centre of intelligent activity. But too frequently the newspapers upon whose agency we rely for those reports are guided in their choice of subjects rather by what will please the ear of the groundlings than by what appeals to the judicious. A fight between two low ruffians obtains much more space than the record of a conference of able and intelligent citizens. A theatrical *début* often receives greater attention than the most serious decision of social organisations; and while it is natural and proper that commercial information should occupy a foremost consideration among men who live by commerce, it is disheartening to observe how the news of the markets of the world is made subservient to a gambling mania only slightly less intense than that which prevails in connection with the sporting profession. Looking under the chequered surface of things as best we may, however, it is not wholly impossible to discern many signs of the deeper currents of thought which characterise our age.

International Politics shows at present a decided subsidence of the alarming symptoms which for two or three winters past has clouded over the festivities of Christmas with sad forebodings of what the New Year might bring forth. It is fatally easy to be optimistic to a fault, as is evidenced by the well-known peaceful assurances of a prominent British statesman immediately before the outbreak of the lamentable war of 1870. But when Continental authorities add their opinion in the same sense as our own diplomats, we who walk in the lowlier rank of citizens may be justified in allowing our hopes of peace greater scope than hitherto. If it be true, as we are assured it is, that the European Powers are so convinced of the enormous risks of the long-predicted European war that they would rather bear the ills of their crushing war tributes than rush upon the unknown fates of an active campaign, the mood is significant, and may prove a first stage to a better one. While men pause they may listen to reason. They may learn to solve the Eastern Question, whether in Europe or in Asia Minor, by less irrational methods than that of violence. The continual additions made by France, Germany, Austria, Italy, and Russia to their war material have been productive of a spirit of bad emulation in this country also. We have voted an enormous sum to maintain our supremacy on the seas. Meanwhile some steps, not altogether doomed to be useless, we believe, have been made in the direction of a closer unity between the Colonies—especially those in Australia—and the mother-country; but India remains not only a subject of anxiety to those who fear the Russian advance, but a source of shame to those who realise with what unseemly brusqueness the natural aspirations of millions of Hindoos are repelled by the insolence of officials and by the indolence of Parliament.

That no great war is troubling the world at present does not prove much; but, as we have said, every period of pause is precious. The French Exhibition may be credited with some share in prolonging the suspension of hostilities; and the bourgeois Republic clearly escaped a grave danger when its citizens refused alike to play into the hands of the Royalist pretenders, and to place its fortunes in the hands of a much suspected military adventurer. The progress of affairs in the other great republic of the world is probably less understood than French affairs are by many Englishmen, despite the kinship of race and language that links them with the United States. The most remarkable of outward symptoms in connection with this great nation is the convening of a Conference, in which the whole of the Western Continent is considered as represented, though the preponderant hand is obviously that of the States. The determination of our American cousins to hold their own is apparent from their activity in regard to the canal projects for uniting the two great oceans at Central America, and by the ominous departure in building more ships of war. Separated by thousands of miles from European embroilments, we hope that the Americans will avail themselves of the lessons of the history of the Old World, and point a better way in the orderly development of civilisation. That there may be embroilments enough in their hemisphere is manifested by the Brazilian revolution and by Canadian intrigues.

Our knowledge of the remoter parts of the world, divided from us by different modes of life as much as by geographical distribution, is limited and vague at best. Africa shows what we fondly hope to be its brightest spots at the points where European influence, chiefly British, has made itself felt, though between the rival claims of Great Britain, Portugal, Germany, and France there is only too much room for disagreement. Egypt and the Cape Colonies, the latter especially, encourage the hopeful mind with a prospect of a final redemption of "the land of Ham" from the curse so adroitly enlarged upon by the quondam defenders of slavery. But the revelations, brought home to us through the heroic toils of STANLEY, respecting the interior of that frightful

land where the predatory instincts of the kidnapper are only too swiftly communicated to the tribal leaders who dominate the forest and swamp, are so terrible as to vividly remind us of LIVINGSTONE'S description of Central Africa as the "running sore of the world." If the Anti-Slavery Convention now proceeding can unite European philanthropy in a grand effort to staunch that ulcerous blot on humanity, the year that saw its inauguration will deservedly live long in the annals of the century. By the side of these sad records of desolation and apparently wasted effort—the whole of an extensive and astonishingly fertile province being relinquished to unscrupulous and savage spoilers, who burn a village and slay a tribe with equal ruthlessness—the records of Eastern Asia are almost tolerable. As the veil is lifted from time to time, and we see into the Empire that dubs itself "Celestial," we observe very conflicting elements. A dreary conservatism has settled down upon the millions who thriftily subsist in provinces the names of which ninety-nine European readers out of a hundred could not guess at. The ambitious instincts of some of these Chinese rulers, stimulated by contact with the French, British, and Russian Powers, has led to warlike preparations which have provoked speculation respecting the possibility of another swarming of Easterns over the less populous West. But the real weakness of the ruling Powers in that part of the world is testified by the total inadequacy of all imperial measures to restrain the teeming population from inhabiting the lowlying plains, which have been subject to inundation by the Yellow River for ages, and which have been once more the scene of a destruction of human life from this cause on a scale that is appalling. The sister Empire of Japan presents, we are tempted to say, a curious rather than a serious problem, except in as far as every national and racial problem is serious to the thoughtful student. The mixture of mere mimicry with the loyal endeavour of the Japanese to profit by the experience of the West diminishes in some degree the confidence with which we await the future development of this singular people. The year that is closing has brought European and American influence more closely to bear upon them, and personal opinion is not wanting to the effect that the Japanese are destined to play a most important part in the civilisation of man in the East.

The course of social and religious development are, of course, best shown in connection with that side of the world's life which is most susceptible of change. In the countries where fixed custom rules we see little to distinguish one year from another, and this applies to so large a portion of the population of the earth that it would be difficult to speak with confidence as to any "progress" being made among them in this respect. The case is so far different, however, with the most living life of the age that every group of reformers and religionists has its censor who estimates for them the moral and spiritual revenues of the year. Our modest share of such a function we may essay to discharge in a further article on the progress of the year.

CHRISTMAS WEEK AND THE NEW YEAR.

LIKE Pilgrim in the quaint old story,
We have rested during Christmas week
In the palace touched by light of heavenly glory,
In the palace Beautiful.

There Prudence, Piety, and Charity reside,
Sisters in loving service and in wisdom meek.
There is a place of rest, whate'er betide,
For those who help upon their journey seek.
And there the faithful wanderer in Peace doth dwell,
While he of Difficulty past, they heavenly secrets tell.

Then with the morning light he girds his armour on;
With strength renewed and courage and good cheer,
He sets his face toward the rising sun.
And as he, grateful, turns him to depart,
Peace and goodwill are murmured in his heart;
He takes them with him, secret comrades dear.
The sisters bid him keep the onward way,
Nor turn to this side, nor to that, in fear,
But through humility his course with patience run,
And finish steadfastly the journey well begun. V. D. D.

"MINOR RELIGIOUS SECTS.—The chief of these are the Unitarians (or, as they prefer it, English Presbyterians), with about 340 ministers, 345 chapels and other places of worship. Although avowed Unitarianism does not show any apparent increase, its principles have spread, and many clergymen now teach doctrines very similar to those generally held by the Unitarians at the commencement of the century."—From *Whitaker's Almanack, 1890*, a copy of which invaluable publication has been sent to us.

CHURCHES AND SOCIETIES.

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(Secretaries and others are particularly requested to send their reports—which should be as brief as convenient—not later than Tuesday, otherwise such matter must be condensed or postponed.)

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THE NEW UNITARIAN CHAPEL, CARLISLE.

THE opening service of this handsome and commodious building was held on the 18th inst. The Rev. W. H. LAMBELLE, the minister of the church, read the lessons, and the Rev. CAREY WALTERS, of London, preached the sermon. It was understood that the hymn which commenced the service had been written for the occasion by the minister of the congregation.

The Rev. CHAS. HARGROVES, of Leeds, offered the dedicatory prayer. The text of the preacher was taken from Zechariah xi. 7, "And I took unto me two staves; the one I called Beauty, and the other I called Bands," or, as the new version has it, "One staff I called Perfectness, the other Union." Upon these words Mr. WALTERS founded a most beautiful and inspiring discourse, exhorting his hearers to aim at that perfectness that dwelt in the beauty of the Lord, and at the union that would make them one with each other, one with Christ and one with God, and putting character always before creed or mere profession of faith. The whole service was a very impressive one. The singing was led by Mrs. Sutherland, Mrs. Miller, and Mr. Sutcliffe, of the Newcastle choir, and Mr. R. Affleck presided at the fine new organ which has been erected to aid the psalmody of the congregation. About one hundred and sixty persons were present, and the collection, made after the service, realised over £34. Amongst the visitors we noticed the Earl of Carlisle, the Revs. J. C. Pollard (of Lancaster), Ceredig Jones (of Bradford), H. Williamson (of Dundee), and Mr. I. M. Wade (as representing the British and Foreign Unitarian Association), Messrs. Joseph and John Lupton, Mr. Mathers (president of the Unitarian Home Missionary College), Mr. Laidler and Mr. Glendining (of Newcastle).

A public tea was held in the evening, tickets for which were one shilling each, the fine large schoolroom underneath the chapel, in which it took place, and which will hold nearly as many persons as the chapel, being quite filled. Although the whole building—owing to the slow and dilatory action of the building contractor—is far from being finished, one was glad to see that provision is being made for a set of class rooms, without which convenience no new schools should be built.

After an excellent tea, presided over by Mrs. Lambelle and other ladies of the congregation, the people adjourned upstairs to the chapel, and listened for an enjoyable half hour to a selection of beautiful music given by Mr. Affleck on the organ, which alike tested its power and fine quality, and the skill and ability of the executant.

The chair was taken at seven o'clock by the Earl of CARLISLE, whose speech is given below.

The Rev. W. H. LAMBELLE then read the treasurer's report, which showed that, whilst liberal donations had been received, about £500 more would be required for the full equipment of the chapel and school. They had been greatly indebted to the British and Foreign Unitarian Association for the help rendered, and especially so to the great exertions made by Mr. Joseph Lupton, who had so nobly worked for and espoused their cause.

Mr. GLENDINING in an able speech seconded the resolution, that the treasurer's report be received and adopted. This was carried unanimously.

Mr. JOSEPH LUPTON followed in an excellent speech, recounting how he had first become acquainted with Mr. Lambelle, and the cause he was endeavouring to establish at Carlisle. Now, seeing the earnestness of the people their preacher had gathered about him, he had been anxious to further their efforts, and how readily the friends he had privately applied to had responded to his appeal for help. He trusted with their noble chairman that their cause, which now looked so full of promise, would result in a lasting success. Later in the evening Mr. Lupton mentioned that the donation of £50, promised by the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, had that day been received, together with the trust deed of the chapel binding the place solely to the worship of God.

Mr. WARDLAW, an old and respected member of the congregation, followed Mr. Lupton, and in a few heartfelt and impressive words, expressed the pleasure he felt at having lived to see this day, and invoked the blessing of God on the cause which their meeting was meant to inaugurate.

Several other speakers then followed, amongst others the Rev. C. Hargroves, Mr. I. M. Wade, representing the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Mr. John Lupton, the Rev. Ceredig Jones and Mr. Mathers.

The meeting was interspersed with hymns, concerted music and solos, and with thanks to the Chairman, which he briefly but cordially acknowledged, and with thanks also to the choir, the meeting broke up, having entered heartily into the proceedings, and with zealous expressions afterwards from numbers of them of a desire to do their best to make their efforts result in a glad success.

An interesting fact in connection with the building of this church ought not to be overlooked. Among those who have expressed their best wishes for the success of the congregation, and who have contributed to the funds, are four clergymen of the Church of England. One of them a few days ago wrote to our minister regretting his inability to be present at the opening, and went on to say, "Will you have the kindness to add the enclosed trifle to the collection? I wish I could afford a larger sum to express my sympathy with the noble work done by the Unitarian Church in England and America, and which has so profoundly influenced the Church of England for truth and righteousness." Another clergyman wrote to Mr. Lambelle: "I rejoice with you on the completion of your building. I pray for God's blessing on your endeavours for the cause of truth. Truth is one: its parts are many: its distortions more. Such expressions as these show the growth of a larger charity among the supporters of the different parties of Christendom."

THE following is an extended report of the speech referred to above:—The Earl of CARLISLE, who was enthusiastically received, said he wished it had fallen to the lot of someone more worthy than himself to have presided. Around him he saw those who by the work they had done were far more fitted than he to speak to the Church, of its work, and of its nature. He was only a comparatively recent member of their community, and yet he was there presiding. But he thought his experience of other organisations—political and temperance—had led them to ask him to preside. His experience of those organisations also made him know that it was very inconvenient when people who were asked to speak began to make excuses; and so he had accepted the invitation without any demur, though he knew very well that what he could say could not be worthy of the occasion. As a Protestant layman he rejoiced at the establishment of this new centre of religious life. It might be asked why he made use of the word Protestant. The reason was that he believed that at the present time they had need of the spirit of Protestantism. He did not mean by Protestantism an adherence to the formulas of the Reformation of the fifteenth century, but he meant that spirit which induced their fathers in those times to refuse to have anything to do with a system—very august and very indispensable though it seemed at the time—which was founded and wrapped up in dogma and ritual, and which they looked upon as false and idolatrous. Then, as now, there had been men who wished to keep the influence of the Church while they altered its character, and while they believed as little in the dogmas that were objected to as any Lutheran. There had been men, too, though fewer, perhaps, who looked upon the creeds of the Protestant as being as fabulous as the formulas they had objected to. Still, in spite of this, in spite of the force of the universal Church and of its secular allies, our fathers had made their protest, and made a Protestant nation of this country. And the result of that had been that in this country we had acquired by the consequences of that Reformation certain qualities of which we were very proud, and of which we frequently boasted. But he thought the good effects that we boasted of, those qualities that we had gained, would not be retained by us unless we retained the spirit as well as the name of that Reformation—(cheers). A French playwright said, *A quoi bon un Protestant qui ne proteste pas*—"What is the use of a Protestant who does not protest?"—and he thought that at this time there were a great many of our countrymen who were under that censure. We live in times when from a variety of different causes many of the dogmas of the Established Churches have come to be as incredible to the members of those Churches, both lay and clerical, as the dogmas of the Roman Church were to the Reformers of the fifteenth century—(hear, hear)—and yet there has been no adequate protest made from inside or outside to assert that belief. While this feeling of the weakness and the falseness of many of the old formulas had been growing, what were the other forces that were gathering round us? First of all, on one side there was the Church of Rome with its great experience and the great power which came from that experience. Then there was the growing strength of the Anglican Catholic party, who at times seemed to differ very little from the mother Church, and who abhorred the very name of Protestant. And then on the extreme opposite side there was the scientific Agnostic, who boasted that he was the man of the century, and that the future was to be his entirely. In Roman Catholic countries this separation and agnosticism were still more marked. There, we were told, he believed with much truth, on one side you had the women and

peasantry priest-ridden, and on the other hand the men of active minds and education are aggressive materialists. We were saved from that state of things in this country by the tradition of our Protestantism, but in his opinion tradition would not suffice unless it was revived. If we had among us a large proportion of men who did not believe in the formulas of the Church which they professed, he believed we should be no longer protected by that tradition. We had in the Church a party of men who might become the leaders of a new Reformation, but who were forced rather to spend their energies in making apologies for the position which to many plain men seemed untenable—(hear, hear). While that was the case with the clergy, the laymen—more particularly the younger generation of laymen—were sliding with increasing quickness into the camp of pure negation, satisfying their conscience by saying that morality did not depend upon dogma. And when the full result of that movement was seen we would then have that condition which he had said was the case in Roman Catholic countries; we would have an abrupt division between superstition on one side and aggressive Atheism on the other. It was only to a renewal of the spirit of Protestantism that we could look for salvation from this disastrous situation. He believed the Unitarian Church fulfilled the requirements of the men who were in the position he had described—of those who could no longer hold to the old formulas of the orthodox churches, but who held that a belief and a trust in a God are the only means which would enable them to fight the fight of their lives and to look with hope to the future of humanity. Within this church he believed they would be able to feel fully and more really than they had ever done before—when they had been hampered in an acquiescence in a mythology they could not really believe—the beauty of the character of Christ, and would be able more fully than ever before to understand the significance of his life and teaching. While they understood Christianity with a fresh force they would be able to feel in sympathy with all that was best in the other great religions of the world. They would no longer look upon those religions as the worship of devils by impostors, as used to be thought; but would look upon them as the strivings of men after God, men of like passions and nature as themselves, only situated in different times and circumstances. And whilst they would be able to make use of the words of the Hebrew prophet or Psalmist, they would also feel as their own the teaching and the language of those men who had most influenced our own time, though they might not belong to their communion—Thomas Carlyle—(cheers)—Mazzini, and Matthew Arnold—(cheers)—men as different as possible from each other in their lives and natures, but alike in the fact that they were not silent about the belief that was in them, that they said what they had to say to influence their generation, that they protested alike against the superstitions of the past and the imaginative materialism of the present. With all these influences inducing men to come in their direction why was it that few, comparatively to the state of opinion outside, joined the Unitarian community? He supposed it was because the Unitarian Church was not a noisy or ostentatious body of men—(hear, hear). It had existed for a long time, and so it happened that those who were shaken from their old foundations, looking out for something new, passed it by, and were not aware that at their very doors there was a body of men among whom they might find freedom and sympathy, and that communion of thought that was so great a solace to the weary mind—(cheers). By saying that he certainly did not mean to suggest, what would be impertinence on his part, that it was the duty of that society to engage in an aggressive propaganda. He believed little good—irritation and not conviction—followed a course of that kind; but he wished the character and nature of the Unitarian Church were a little more widely known—(hear, hear). In saying that he felt he was only giving his humble approval to a course that had already been taken. The establishment of Manchester New College at Oxford was, he hoped, the beginning of a new epoch in the history of the Society—(hear, hear)—and he believed there were other signs of activity among them. Certainly none of those signs was more cheering than the establishment of that Church as a centre of religious life in our district, and he was heartily glad to be able to take part in that meeting.

SHORT REPORTS.

ATHERTON.—On Friday and Saturday last a sale of work in connection with the Chowbent Unitarian School, Bolton Old-road, was opened, when a large number of useful and ornamental articles were disposed of, and large numbers attended.

BELFAST: PRESENTATION TO THE REV. J. C. STREET.—On Sunday last the Rev. J. C. Street was the recipient of an interesting presentation from the teachers and scholars of the Sunday-school in connection with the Church of the Second Congregation, Belfast. The reverend gentleman during his pastorate has evinced a deep interest in the religious instruction of the young, and the memento of esteem he has now received is not an unflattering recognition of his labours. The presentation, which consisted of a handsome Morocco writing

case fitted throughout, and bearing Mr. Street's initials, was made by Mr. W. W. Drummond, and was accompanied by a letter signed by the teachers, of which the following is the text:—"We wish to take this opportunity of thanking you on behalf of the scholars and ourselves for all the kindness you have shown to and the interest you have taken in our Sunday-school while we have been together, and to assure you of the sorrow we feel at the thought of the coming separation from you. It would not be too much to say that we do not think we shall ever find one who will be so much a friend as well as a helper as you have been to us, or whose words will appeal so much to our hearts and consciences. We shall always look back with great pleasure to the happy times we have had with you, and we hope you may sometimes be among us again in the future. Will you accept the accompanying gift as a small token of our love, and be assured we wish you and Mrs. Street every happiness in your new home?" Mr. Street, who was taken by surprise, and was deeply moved, made a suitable response. On Monday evening, at a social gathering of the members and friends of the Rosemary-street Mutual Improvement Society, under the presidency of Mr. Vere Foster, Mr. Street was presented with a handsome illuminated address, framed in gold, and a purse of sovereigns, in recognition of his services as president of the society during the eighteen years of its existence. Several gentlemen addressed the meeting, speaking in eulogistic terms of Mr. Street's work, and that gentleman responded in an address in which he reviewed the past history of the society, and spoke hopefully of its future. The proceedings concluded with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

BIRKENHEAD.—The last meeting of the Charing-cross Literary and Social Union for the first half of the present session took place in the Lecture Hall, Charing-cross, on Wednesday evening, December 18. The whole of the evening was taken up by the Rev. R. A. Armstrong's lecture upon Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt*, which he described in a graphic and telling fashion, following the varying and fantastic actions of the hero of the play with distinctness and realistic faithfulness. He described what he considered to be Ibsen's hidden meaning running through the play, and altogether gave an excellent idea of it to many who had not had the opportunity of reading the play itself. Mr. Alderman Willmer occupied the chair.

IPSWICH.—The special services were continued on Sunday in the Co-operative Hall in the afternoon, and in the Unitarian Chapel in the evening. Both services partook of a Christmas nature. On both occasions the attendance was very large, many having to be turned away from the hall in the afternoon whilst in the evening the aisles were filled with benches and chairs.

LEIGH.—Mr. J. A. Devison writes to disclaim responsibility for reports of proceedings in this district.

MAIDSTONE.—On Sunday afternoon Miss Drake, who is leaving the town, was presented with a writing-desk from the choir and Sunday-school teachers; also with a beautifully bound volume of poems from the scholars, in token of her services as organist and Sunday-school teacher. The Rev. E. G. Cammidge, in giving the presentation, said that all regretted losing the services of Miss Drake, who had officiated at the organ for some time, and who was so greatly beloved by her scholars. He felt sure that their loss would be a great gain to the church at Guildford. Mr. F. Ruck, the superintendent, made a few remarks, after which the children's bank money (£56), which had been collected during the year, was returned with interest. The Sunday-school was never in such a good condition as at present, and one pleasing feature is that the senior scholars form part of the regular evening congregation.

MERTHYR-TYDFIL.—On Sunday afternoon last the annual service of the teachers and children of the Unitarian Sunday-school was held in the chapel. The introductory service was conducted by the minister, the Rev. Nestor R. Williams. During the service several hymns and recitations were given by the children. Mr. Thomas Thomas, a member of the congregation, addressed a few pertinent and feeling remarks to the children, which were well received. Immediately before the service commenced the distribution of the money saved by the children in the bank took place, amounting to over £53. The minister paid a well-deserved compliment to the teachers of the school for their regular attendance and assiduity during the whole year.

PADIHAM.—The bazaar recently held at Padiham has proved an unqualified success. In round numbers, a little over £500 has been raised altogether. This is a most satisfactory result in view of the reduced circulation of money in the town, on account of the depressed condition of the local cotton industry, more or less since February, but especially in the autumn, when the "cotton corner" was working its periodic mischief. The bazaar was opened on the first day by County Councillor J. P. Haslam, of Bolton, a Wesleyan superintendent minister and a Church of England clergyman being present on the platform; on the

second day by County Councillor J. Monk, a Wesleyan layman of the Dallinger school; and on the third day by Councillor Bibby, a native of Padiham, now an active supporter of our Burnley congregation. The nobility and gentry of the town and district most liberally patronised the bazaar, and it was supported by members of all sects and parties, of all ranks and classes. To our Unitarian friends at a distance, who kindly forwarded parcels or donations in money for the bazaar, the congregation is truly grateful. Altogether, the bazaar has enabled the Committee to effect certain valuable improvements upon their large and handsome Gothic chapel and school without incurring any debt; and it has also shown that Unitarianism is not now the scare it once was in this neighbourhood, and that the chapel, the minister, the people, are now conceded "a local habitation and a name."

WALSALL.—The Rev. Dr. Crosskey, in an address to the students of the Science and Art Institute, said a man might be a hedger and ditcher, working in the fields from morning to night with utter weariness, bearing his heavy burdens and digging the hard soil. He might go to bed, his day's work done, uncheered by any high thought. But give him some kind of knowledge; let him understand something of the mystic processes by which the seed became the ripened grain; let him know something of how the weeds by the roadside had become what they were, through long ages of strange growth; let him understand somewhat of the glory of the world he had to till, and the toil would be brightened by intelligence, and the weary task be lightened. Then supposing they were workers in metal or leather, or in other material. If there were some understanding of the forces of nature with which they had to deal; if, instead of the dull, dead, mechanical routine of the day, there were intermixed some knowledge of the strange sympathies, affinities, and forces, some understanding of the nature of the wondrous elements with which they had to deal, the hard day's task in the shop, like that of the labourer in the field, would be uplifted and glorified.

WANTED ANOTHER MAN.

AMONG the inventions of the future we must look for a "duplicate" man who will enable the original individual to get through his proper work in a proper way. Thus in our little circle there is a great demand for "duplicates" to enable persons who profess to take great interest in the moral and mental advancement of their fellow-creatures to sustain their reputation without sacrificing their own ease and comfort. A number of comfortably circumstanced gentlemen, for instance, are each in sad need of "another man" to represent them at church on Sunday, take their place on committees, attend lectures, and so forth. A few ladies (not many, their case is not so urgent) want other selves to go to mothers' meetings, visit sick people in their homes and in hospitals, teach children in Sunday-schools, and organise benevolent agencies of all kinds. The inventor of the "duplicate" man or woman will save a good many conscientious scruples felt by the more sensitive of these good folk, who really want to do their duty to their generation—they pray regularly to that effect, anyhow—and who still cannot tear themselves away from the theatre, the whist party, the ball, the concert, the afternoon tea, and other innocent delights.

But most of all we want "another man" to assist our real minister—his substantial shadow, so to speak, who would take up a few of the score of non-essential duties which are thrust into his hands. We want a "duplicate" minister who will let our young man stop in his study a few hours every day, especially at the first end of the week. I have found him there at the other end, but he always gives me the impression of then being there perforce. A good strong "duplicate" preferred; one who will attend his tea party, political meeting, philosophical society, soup kitchen committee, and School Board meetings faithfully and well; who will visit the outlying members of his congregation regularly; who will run off to the anniversaries and conferences that keep taking our proper minister from his proper place; and one who will intercept all our grumbling and growling before it reaches the ears of his *alter ego*, who shall thus be free in mind and body to serve us with glad words and works of strength. The inventor of "duplicates" of this kind will hear something to his advantage on writing to

THE JUNIOR WARDEN.

ASSOCIATION SUNDAY.

The Executive Committee of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association acknowledge, with thanks, the following Congregational Collections received up to December 24.

FOURTH LIST.

	£	s.	d.
Longsight	2	3	1
Bournemouth	1	2	9
Glossop	2	0	6
Park-lane, near Wigan	2	0	0
Cwmbach	1	5	6
Dover	1	1	0
Killinchy	1	5	0
Glasgow:—St. Vincent-street	2	2	0
Huddersfield	1	7	2
Torquay	1	16	6
Wolverhampton	1	12	11
Stockton-on-Tees	1	7	6
Douglas, I.M.	1	11	2
Dowlais	0	16	0
Chelmsford	0	6	6
Leicester:—Free Christian Church	1	1	0
Darlington	1	0	0

HENRY IERSON, Secretary.

Essex Hall, Essex-street, Strand, London.
December 24, 1889.

BLACKLEY UNITARIAN CHAPEL, BLACKLEY, NEAR MANCHESTER.

AN APPEAL.

This congregation, which is composed principally of the working class, being still burdened with a debt on the New Chapel, and having to raise a further sum to cover cost of replacing floor, repairing pews, &c., in consequence of dry rot, urgently appeal to friends of the cause for financial assistance towards clearing off the £450 that is required. Towards this amount the members of the congregation have, during the last few weeks, responded to a personal appeal in a very liberal manner, having subscribed amongst themselves £150, but it is now necessary to ask for outside aid, and they are hopeful that help will be forthcoming from generous Unitarian friends throughout the country which will enable them to entirely free the Chapel from debt.

Donations will be thankfully received by

Rev. JOHN ELLIS,
The Parsonage, Blackley;
Mr. THOMAS KNOTT,
DeLaunay's-road, Higher Crumpsall;
Mr. J. H. CHATTWOOD,
Hazelwood, Higher Crumpsall.

DONATIONS ALREADY PROMISED.

	£	s.	d.
Members of congregation	150	0	0
Manchester District Unitarian Association (Special Fund)	25	0	0

DEATHS.

BLATCHFORD.—On December 19th, at Alexandra-villa, Watts'-road, Tavistock, Rebecca, widow of the late James Blatchford, of Plymouth, aged 85 years. Friends will kindly accept this, the only, intimation.

KENSETT.—On the 15th inst., at Ash-road, Aldershot, Walter Kensett, aged 64.

RUPTURE

(HERNIA.)

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OUR CALENDAR.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29.

It is requested that notices of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday Afternoon.

LONDON.

Bedford Chapel, Bloomsbury, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. STOPFORD BROOKE.
 Bermondsey, Fort-road, Upper Grange-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. G. CARTER.
 Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. M. AINSWORTH.
 Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. C. J. STREET, M.A.
 Essex Church, The Mall, Notting-hill-gate, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. CAREY WALTERS.
 Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-pl., Paragon road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. T. WHITEHEAD.
 Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. J. B. LLOYD.
 Kentish Town, Free Christian Church, Clarence-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. CLEMENT PIKE.
 Little Portland-street Chapel, near Oxford-circus, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. P. H. WICKSTEED, M.A.
 Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 11 A.M., Mr. J. DARLISON, and 7 P.M., Rev. C. L. CORKRAN.
 Peckham, Avondale-road, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Dr. MUMMERY.
 Richmond, Unitarian Christian Church, Channing Hall, Friar's-lane, 11.30 and 7, Rev. SILAS FARRINGTON.
 Stamford-street, Blackfriars-road, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. COPELAND BOWIE.
 Stoke Newington, The Green, 11.15 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. WOODING, B.A.
 Wandsworth, Unitarian Christian Church, East-hill, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.
 Wood Green Assembly Rooms, 7 P.M., Rev. T. W. FRECKELTON.

PROVINCIAL.

BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. W. STANLEY.
 BOURNEFOUTH, Conservative Club Assembly Room, St. Michael's Rise, 11 A.M., Rev. G. H. VANCE, B.D.
 BRIGHTON, Christ Church Free Christian, New-road, North-st., 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. ALF. HOOD.
 BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. R. COWLEY SMITH.
 CHATHAM, Unitarian Christian Church, Hamond-hill, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. F. ALLEN.
 CHELTENHAM, Bayshill Church, 11 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. EPHRAIM TURLAND.
 LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. R. A. ARMSTRONG, B.A.
 MANCHESTER, Platt Chapel, Rusholme, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. CHAS. T. POYNTING, B.A.
 SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 A.M. and 7 P.M., Rev. S. FLETCHER WILLIAMS.
 SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. CHAS. H. WELLBELOVED.
 TORQUAY, Free Christian Church, Bannercross Hall, 11 A.M. and 6.30 P.M., Rev. FRANK SHAW.

NOTICE.

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The MONTHLY MEETING of the Guild will take place in the Schoolroom of Clarence-road Chapel, Kentish Town, on THURSDAY NEXT, January 2nd, at 8 P.M.

UNITARIAN HOME MISSIONARY COLLEGE.

OPENING OF THE SESSION.

A PUBLIC INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS will be delivered by the Rev. A. GORDON in the MEMORIAL HALL, MANCHESTER, on WEDNESDAY, January 8, at 5 P.M.

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The BIRKBECK ALMANACK, with full particulars, on application.

FRANCIS RAVENSCROFT, Manager.



SHOPPING IN SEDAN CHAIRS IN THE LAST CENTURY.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S VISIT TO PEARS', FOR SOAP FOR HER COMPLEXION, A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.